

ANCIENT SKIES

"Come Search With Us!"

Official Logbook of the Ancient Astronaut Society

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VAL CAMONICA

BY GENE M. PHILLIPS*

Our 1995 Member Expedition to Italy received a warm welcome to the Naquane National Park at Capo di Ponte in the Valley of Camonica (Val Camonica) in northern Italy. We were greeted at the Park entrance by our guide, Barbara Rocca, who introduced us to the Director of Park Guides, Mr. Alberto Galbiati. We were given packets of information about the Park, including a "Welcome" pamphlet which had been especially prepared for us. (See Fig. 1)

The purpose of our visit was to see the "astronauts" of Val Camonica, depicted in Figure 1, which had been mentioned by several writers in the ancient astronaut field. Barbara completed her introductory remarks and outlined the itinerary they had prepared for us, but failed to mention the "astronauts". I then asked: "Where are the caves?"

Barbara answered with another question: "What caves?" Then added: "There are no caves at Val Camonica."

I must hasten to explain that I had erroneously assumed that the astronaut drawings were prehistoric cave paintings, and in the announcement of our Member Expedition to Italy in *Ancient Skies* 22:2, I stated that the drawings were found in caves near Brescia, Italy.

I then asked Barbara: "If there are no caves, where are the astronauts?"

"They are engraved on one of the large stone outcrops here," she replied. "But they are not included in the area which is open to visitors."

"What? The only reason we came to Val Camonica was to see the astronauts firsthand. Surely there must be something you can do." I pleaded.

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The information in this article about the Val Camonica region, the Camunni engravings and the Naquane National Park was excerpted from "Naquane: A History Etched in Stone", a pamphlet which was given to us at the Park.



Figure 1.

"No. We never take visitors to that area of the park," Barbara answered.

During all this dialogue, Mr. Galbiati was standing there with a broad smile on his face and we then realized that he did not speak English. I asked Barbara to please interpret my request for Mr. Galbiati, which she did, but came back with a polite "sorry." She explained that the park covered many hectares, that the astronauts were in a remote section of the Park with no established trails or walkways and that the area was on a steep hillside. Further, she said it was covered with undergrowth and that it was a physically difficult journey that would take a long time. I told her that we had plenty of time and that we really wanted to see the astronauts more than anything else in the park. All this was being translated and communicated to Mr. Galbiati, who finally gave in and told Barbara to tell us that he, personally, would guide us to the site of the astronauts. We were overjoyed! It was then decided that Barbara would first show us the principal engravings at the Park, after which we would follow Mr. Galbiati to the astronauts.

The Naquane National Rock Engravings Park (Parco Nazionale Delle Incisioni Rupestri) is located at the town of Capo di Ponte, on the east side of the Oglio River, almost in the center of Val Camonica, a deep, lush, green fertile valley in the Orobic Alps (Alpi Orobic) in northern Italy. The valley extends northward for about 30 miles from the northern tip of Lake Iseo (Lago di Iseo), which is a 15 mile-long, narrow, deep resort lake equidistant from the cities of Bergamo and Brescia in north central Lombardy, whose capital city is Milan. It is about a two hour drive from Brescia to Capo di Ponte. As the crow flies, it is only about 15 miles from the Park to the Swiss border.

Val Camonica gets its name from the people who inhabited the area about 9,000 years ago, the Camunni (also Camuni). The rock engravings can be found throughout the length of the valley, but the greatest concentrations of engravings are in two areas: at the southern end of the valley near Boario and in the central part of the valley around Capo di Ponte, which is bounded on the east by the high Pizzo Badile peak and on the west by Concarena Mountain. The engravings are on both mountain slopes. While there are a few carved boulders and stelae in the region, most of the engravings are found on the dark gray sedimentary rock outcrops which have been polished smooth by glacial action. The engravings were made by either the percussion technique, that is, by hammering the surface with stone instruments or by a scratching technique using tools with a sharp point. It has been estimated that there are more than 300,000 engravings in the entire region and that the number at the Naquane site is in the tens of thousands. The engraved rocks were first

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reported by Gualtiero Laeng in 1914, but it was not until 1955 that the Naquane National Park was created by the Archaeological Superintendence of Lombardy. The Park covers an area of 86 acres at an altitude of from 1300 to 2000 feet.

The variety of the Camunian inscriptions is staggering. Everything from people, both male and female, to animals, birds, houses, tools, weapons, flowers - they are all here in profusion. Admittedly the etchings are rather crude - sometimes depicting the human body in stick form - but still, all are recognizable for what they were meant to depict. Activities are shown, such as plowing a field, riding a horse, hunting, running, dancing, and even fighting with weapons. Deer are quite commonly portrayed, many with enormous antlers, and some show a person riding a deer! There is a four-wheeled wagon being pulled by a team of horses. There are groups of people in various activities.

Perhaps the most enigmatic of the engravings is the shovel-shape. (See Fig. 2) The shovel-shape is found in profusion on the rocks in Val Camonica and there is much controversy as to whether it actually represents a shovel, or spade, or if it could be a sleigh, a sledge, a wagon, a hammer, a glass, a bell, or what have you.

There are some engravings that defy explanation, such as the one depicted in Figure 3. Is it a winged creature? Or a child jumping a rope?

Most of the Camunian engravings are only a few inches high.

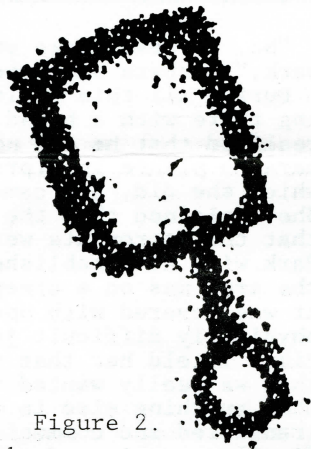


Figure 2.



Figure 3. Strange Camunian engraving.

After over two hours of Barbara's expert tutoring we had seen most of the rocks with the largest concentration of figures and we had obtained a pretty good idea of what Naquane had to offer. But we were still anxious to see the astronauts, so we proceeded to the Park Bookshop where Mr. Galbiati was waiting for us. Both he and Barbara again tried to dissuade us from making the trek to the astronauts, reiterating the difficulty of the terrain and the time it would take. We assured them that we still wanted to do it, so we took off, in single file through the high grass and underbrush, with Mr. Galbiati in the lead, then Barbara and bringing up the rear was our bus driver, Constantino, who also wanted to see the astronauts.

I felt sorry for Mr. Galbiati because he was dressed for the office, not for a hike on the steep mountain slope. He was immaculate in shirt and tie,

neatly pressed trousers and hard-soled dress shoes, which must have been slippery on the steep, grassy terrain. Although it was very hot (mid-August), he kept his cool, both outwardly and, apparently, inwardly. We trudged through briar patches and slithered along the mountain side, grabbing onto small branches to keep from falling. Then it began to sprinkle rain!

After about a half-hour, the marching column came to an abrupt halt and I heard Mr. Galbiati exclaim: "Oh, no!" Fearing that he had slipped and fallen, I hurried towards the front where he and Barbara were standing, looking down at the dark gray stone outcrop.

"What happened?" I called.

"Vandals!" Barbara cried. "Look. Someone has vandalized the astronauts!" She pointed to a white rectangular area on the rock surface. (See Fig. 4) "That is where the astronauts are. Under that mess!" She exclaimed.



Figure 4. Vandalized engraving of astronauts.

Someone had smeared a thick, heavy white plastic material over the 12 inch by 14 inch area of the engravings, completely obliterating the two astronauts. Whether it had been done in an attempt to make an impression of the engravings, or whether it was intended to destroy them, we do not know. If the former, it did not work, because the white material had hardened and could not be removed. Mr. Galbiati picked at it with his fingers, but it held fast.

Mr. Galbiati explained, through Barbara, that he had not visited the site for a long time, because visitors are never brought here, so he had no idea when the damage had been done. He would now have to try to determine how to remove the plastic coating without destroying the engravings.

Naturally we were shocked and dismayed, even speechless, at this strange turn of events. The object of our search was right before our eyes, but we could not see it. We wondered who could have done such a dastardly deed, and why.

Mr. Galbiati had walked on ahead about fifty feet when Barbara informed us that he had remembered that there was another engraving of "astronauts" in the vicinity that were quite similar to the defaced one. Our spirits rose as we trudged on to follow our leader. Finally he shouted that he had found it. We rushed forward and looked down at the dark stone outcrop and could see the faint outline of two figures, apparently helmeted, in much the same poses as in the "original." We took several photos, but unfortunately the relief was so low that it offered little contrast, so the photos are not suitable for publication.

The photos used in this article were taken by Gene M. Phillips.

GIANT'S HANDIWORK?

BY RAY SMITH*

Since retiring to Spain's eastern Mediterranean coast from my native Britain several years ago, I have been intrigued by the phenomenon at Benidorm, in the Province of Alicante. There a stone mountain overlooks the Bay of Benidorm, in which a small, barren island breaks the smooth, placid surface of the sea. The only island for a stretch of about 100 kilometers along the coast, "Islote de Benidorm" is nothing but one huge, massive rock! Looking inland from the coast at the mountain top, one's gaze is riveted towards a huge space which appears to have been chopped out of the top. The mountain and the Islote in the Bay of Benidorm are separated by a distance of 8 kilometers.

The story as related locally is that a giant knocked the piece out of the mountain top to prove his love for a local girl. Believe that if you like! Nevertheless it has been proved by local geologists that the island in the bay has the exact measurements of the cavity in the top of the mountain!



Above: Mountain overlooking the Bay of Benidorm, Alicante, Spain.

Below: Islote de Benidorm. Photos by the author.



*Mr. Smith is a member of a UFO-Ancient Astronaut Discussion Group, composed of retired Britons living in or near Jávea, Alicante, Spain. He, along with several of his fellow members, attended the Ancient Astronaut Society's World Conference in Bern, Switzerland in August 1995. His address is El Eden 11, Orba, Alicante 03790, SPAIN.

ADVANCED COMMUNICATION SYSTEM DESCRIBED IN THE BIBLE

BY ANN MADDEN JONES**

The astronomer Carl Sagan stated in his book The Cosmic Connection (1973) that it would be convincing that Earth had been visited in the remote past by extraterrestrials, if the information in any legend, or if any artifact, was too technologically advanced to have been created by the civilization that created the legend or the artifact. He cited as an example - if an ancient manuscript contained a drawing of the electronic circuitry for a super-heterodyne radio receiver.

The Judeo/Christian Bible contains just such convincing evidence of past visitation to Earth. The ancient Hebrew legends describe a communication system from their god Yahweh (in heaven) to the high priests on Earth, with sufficient detail and accuracy for us to conclude today that they could not possibly have generated these ideas on their own. They describe an orbit-to-Earth system based on the use of microwaves transmitting messages via the Ark of the Covenant and the Tabernacle of the Exodus, and later to Solomon's Temple.

The ancient users of this communication system were not aware of exactly how it worked and, of course they did not describe such aspects as movement of electrons, the use of microwaves, ion gases, etc. What they did describe were the visible, mechanical pieces of the system, which they also constructed, and the results of building this system to exact specifications - the results being that they heard God speak and were able to speak back to Him!

They were commanded by God to place the pieces of the system in exact locations, to wear particular clothing (the priestly vestments which were also part of the communication system); and to carry out precise rituals which would protect them from genetic damage and high voltage injury while they operated the system.

In my recent book The Yahweh Encounters: Bible Astronauts, Ark Radiations and Temple Electronics (1995), I have carefully laid out the electronic circuitry of this system, and provided Biblical evidence of how it worked. From Yahweh's own statement in Exodus 25:21-22 which says "and there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony," to the numerous verses which clearly depict radiation within the tabernacle, and the devices that were used in the system, such as a microphone, antenna, crystal demodulators, power source and the development of oscillations necessary for transmitting, the Bible tells of technology which was thousands of years too advanced for the ancient Hebrews to have conceived of alone. But the technological evidence in the Bible which points to extraterrestrial contact is not limited to the Ark, Tabernacle and Solomon's Temple. It is scattered throughout Scripture, even in the New Testament.

**Ms. Jones is a former school teacher and a graduate of the University of North Carolina. She spent twelve years researching and writing The Yahweh Encounters. The book is available in oversize paperback from SandBird Publishing Group, P.O. Box 56, Carrboro, NC 27510 USA.

We regret to announce the death of Dr. Reinhard Furrer, the former German astronaut who flew aboard the space shuttle Challenger. He died in a small plane crash. Dr. Furrer was one of the speakers at the Society's World Conference in Bern, Switzerland.

Effective January 20, 1996, the Ancient Astronaut Society will have a new telephone area code. The new Telephone Number will be: 847-295-8899. The new Fax Number will be: 847-295-0868.

GIANTS AND SUPER-INTELLIGENT BEINGS IN ANCIENT CUBA?

BY MARIA de los ANGELES HDEZ. FRAGA*

Even though Cuba is not a country noted for its archaeological importance, it has some things worth considering.

The Geographic Statistic and Historic Dictionary of the Island (Vol.1, p 131 - 1863) describes roomy caves with crystallized (glazed) walls showing traces of an aboriginal culture. In reference to the Cave of the Sierra del Frijol, in the territory of the Hacienda Pueblo Viejo, MAISI, the Dictionary records the existence of a populous settlement of people who did not inhabit the huts where the Indians (so-called) lived when the Spaniards took possession of the island. The foundations of a huge rectangular wall (820 ft x 26 ft) evidence their knowledge of a more advanced type of architecture than rustic huts. Further, based upon the finding of colossal bone remains of strange shapes, many believe that those ruins were of a temple where various types of sacrifices to their idols took place.

In light of these facts, I ask: Did giants really exist, and also in Cuba? Years ago, studying this subject with the help of a terrestrial globe, I came to the realization that, except for the extreme north and south regions, there have surfaced in varying degrees traces of enormous beings all over the world: From Texas to Easter Island, from Central Europe to Central Africa, from the former Soviet Union to Java and Ceylon. Were those the Atlanteans who found safety in other lands when their Continent was destroyed by cataclysms? Or perhaps were they extraterrestrials who inhabited Planet Earth in remote times and then disappeared suddenly when they returned to their home planet? The fact is that under various denominations, they emerge in the writings and lore of many countries, with their art, culture and traditions. We know them as Atlanteans, Vikings, Guanches, Titans, Colossi and other names. They probably were the builders of the massive megalithic works which fill us with awe.

For its part, Cuba has, underground, its oldest and greatest "museum" created and left there by primitive man on the walls of its caves. The aborigines believed their caves to be endowed with living powers and held them sacred. In the Caves of Pichardo, in Sierra de Cubitas, there are several anthropomorphic pictographs of "orejones" (big eared ones). See Figures 1 and 2. One of them, known as "Bayamanaco", represents the spirit of fire and lightning. It is depicted as an extraterrestrial with a plate on top of its head to receive offerings.

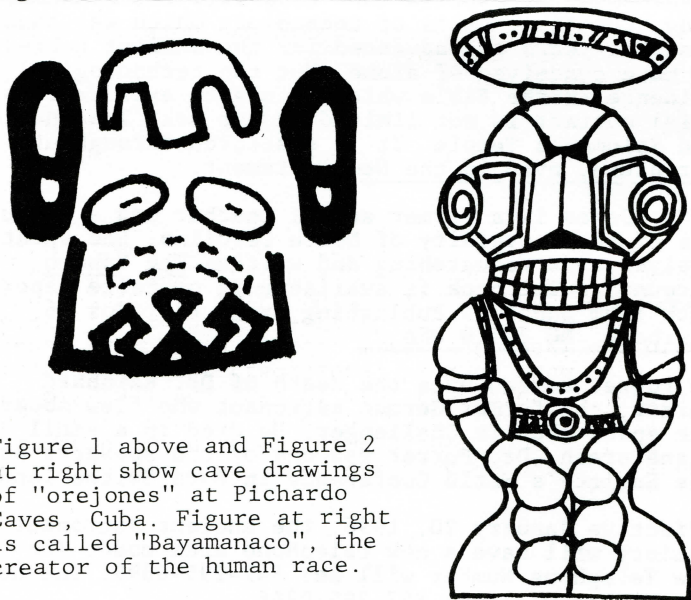


Figure 1 above and Figure 2 at right show cave drawings of "orejones" at Pichardo Caves, Cuba. Figure at right is called "Bayamanaco", the creator of the human race.

The grandfather of all human beings, Bayamanaco's image resembles the Dogu statues of ancient Japan (6,000 years old). Pictorial and carved work representing "orejones" are found also in Easter Island in the Pacific Ocean, in pre-Columbian America and in ancient India. This is striking evidence of a world-wide connection which unites different and distant regions in similar traditions.

Another important cave in Cuba is the one at Punta del Este in the Island of Pinos. There we find the finest example of the country's rock art. In a large hall (85 ft x 75 ft) on the main gallery, there are 213 pictographs. The Central Motif is composed of 56 concentric circles, 28 black ones (nights) and 28 red ones (days); a red arrow pointing East (90 degrees) to the Spring and Autumn Equinoxes; and a short series of concentric circles which, according to the Cuban scholar, Fernando Ortiz, could symbolize the calculation of the lunar month as it was conceived by their makers. It is interesting to note that the Babylonians had the same concept.

The Cuban archaeologist, Antonio Nunez Jimenez, believes that the Punta del Este Cave is an observatory of "sidereal constellations" because of its geographical location. Its wide entrance, facing East, and other interesting natural features make this cave an excellent natural observatory since it allows one to follow the emergence of the Sun on the horizon from the center of the subterranean vault. Anyone who cares to stay in the cave for several days can watch the first rays of the majestic red-hued sunrise fall upon the different recesses of the cave at different times of the year. The cave's ceiling is pierced by seven cylindrical skylights through which pass the rays of the Sun and the Moon. A few days after the Summer Solstice (June 22) an observer standing under the central skylight can see on the vast entrance arch of the cave the emergence of the solar disc over the horizon at an approximate azimuth of 66 degrees (East-North-East) and then see the Sun's rays fall on the northern arch of the entrance illuminating the cave laterally and focusing on the main pictographs. At night the skylights offer a view of many stars and occasionally of the Moon and the planet Jupiter.

One of the most important pictographs in the cave is one, drawn in black, which, in perfect linear harmony, depicts a complex reptilian figure, which resembles the spectacled serpent or cobra of Asia. Such animals are non-existent in Cuba.

Who made the pictographs on the walls of the Punta del Este Cave? Who, thousands of years ago, devised the celestial observatory and depicted on the cave walls the phases of the Moon? Do they simply represent the imponderable forces of the Solar System which intrigued aboriginal man? Or, could they represent the presence of extraterrestrial beings on Earth? Or did the Mayas, who reached the pinnacle of astronomical science, venture into Cuban waters? I consider the Cuban aborigines incapable of producing such intelligent works. I hope that some day these questions will be answered.

*Mrs. Fraga, an English translator, is a graduate in Economics and also studied Theosophy. For the past 8 years she has studied the enigmas of the universe. Her address is Edif. 903, Apt. 23, Rpte. Guiteras, C.P. 12800, Havana, CUBA.

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